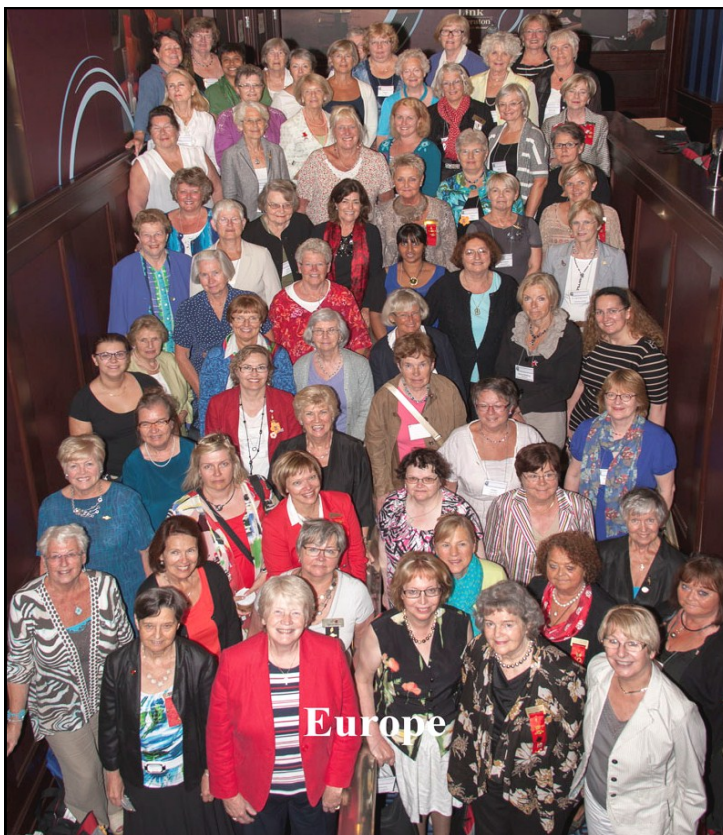




INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN NEW YORK

AUTUMN 2012

Volume 13 No 4

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| Alpha Chapter Reports | 17 | We shall, as always, need copy for the next Spring edition, so please send on any articles of interest, in particular anything you do in the broad educational field. I will also try to include items which had to be omitted this time because of lack of space. Items are particularly welcome from new members, who can add so much of interest to us all. I particularly welcome any photographs you may have to offer. Items in Word preferably, photos attached to an email. Any copy or photos by 1 December please for the next edition, but do send items before that if they are ready (dbillam@hotmail.com) |
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| <p>The cover photograph, which shows the European members present at the International Convention, and those with an asterisk, are courtesy of Photo-graphs by Jim, Floresville, Texas. They can be seen and purchased online through</p> <p>www.photographsbyjim.org</p> | | <p>Something else to look forward to! The European Regional Conference in 2013 will take place in Amsterdam from 7-10 August. Do put this date in your diary!</p> |

Sheila Roberts

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT: 2011-2013

Ed: photo shows Sheila at the Honor Reception with other State Presidents and Barbara Day)



The summer has flown by - well we didn't have much in the way of summer to start with but what a lively one it has turned out to be. I think the Olympics has dominated everyone's lives, whether you are a sports fan or not and Britain seems to have placed itself back firmly on the world map as a result. One other thing dominated my summer - going to New York for my first DKG International Convention. It was quite an experience with many memorable moments. I had no idea what it would feel like to be one of 2,200 conference attendees. Naturally, the majority of delegates were American and how warm and welcoming they all were, without exception. The Keynote Speakers were excellent, well truthfully, three out of the four were. One was not so great. The number and variety of workshops were superb. Dorothy's workshop on the 'Lady and the Unicorn' Tapestry was absolutely wonderful. She is so knowledgeable about tapestries and her own work is truly outstanding.

There were visits to enjoy though I didn't have as much time to visit as some. I had to attend Executive Board meetings, as did Evelyn who had accepted to be Chair of the Accreditation Committee which meant she was 'on duty' an enormous chunk of the time - but she did us proud announcing voting members present at the beginning of each General Session as well as the Exec Board meetings in her gentle but confident manner. One visit I enjoyed along with Diana, Unity, Kate and Tony, was the evening dinner cruise. The Manhattan skyline, including the new twin towers, looked amazing, so beautifully illuminated. The Statue of Liberty was dramatic as we hove to right next to it. However, the poor 'old' Empire State Building was lit up red, yellow and green and looked like a pizza take away- or a cheap Christmas decoration. Poor old thing!

One of my most memorable moments was the flag-carrying ceremony. It's quite something, even for a big cynic like me, to carry the flag in front of 2,200 people to the music of 'Land of Hope and Glory', but the biggest moment was when the black Banqueting Manager came over so excited and started telling me all about 'The Union Jack ' (I know, purists, that its real name is simply 'The Union Flag' but the man called it that). He was so excited and sang a song all about the British Empire. Turned out he was from Antigua, brought up as a good colonial to believe in Britain as a noble and good 'mother'. He is also a jazz singer and so came to the table that evening during the banquet and serenaded again. What an unexpected treat to have Britain so admired.

One of the most shocking things though was chatting with some teachers from Upstate New York and being told that the cutbacks and low education budget in their already very poor area means that class teachers buy every single text and reading book, paper, pencils, paint, exercise books etc for their classes. They said the families are so poor that if they didn't do it then the children would suffer. I was shocked. America is certainly a country of the haves and have nots.

Lastly please put Saturday 23rd March, 2013 in your diaries. It is the date for our annual State Conference. This year it will be a day conference to be held at the rather beautiful River Conference Centre in Tonbridge, a very short walk from Tonbridge Station and with a large secure private car park. Although it is not yet confirmed, I have applied to Headquarters to request a highly recommended International Speaker. She is Canadian and will talk on Equality in Education, multicultural and ESL. I hope all of you will manage to be present! Best wishes for the new school year.

Note: GB Executive Board had agreed we should vote for Carolyn Pittman for First International Vice President, and she was duly elected. The new International President is Dr Beverly Helms.



Diana Bell, Kate York, Unity Harvey and Sheila Roberts enjoy their cruise. The Manhattan skyline forms a dramatic backdrop.

(photo by Tony York)

Reminder!! The GB State Conference for 2013 will be held at the River Conference Centre in Tonbridge on Saturday 23 March—see Sheila's letter above.

At International Conventions, the Administrative Board forms part of a larger body – the Executive. The layout of the room is reminiscent of a mini United Nations. The Administrative Board members are seated at tables facing everyone else. State Presidents are seated at rows of tables to the left-hand side of the room, in alphabetical order of states. On the right, a similar arrangement seats all State Executive Secretaries in attendance, with a front row reserved for Past International Presidents. Seating is available at the back of the room for any members wishing to observe. This year, amongst others, seven of the prospective members from Japan were present. Meetings begin with a report from the Credentials Committee about the number of members in each category present. At the first session, the Rules of Order are read in full; microphone monitors, timekeepers and floor pages are introduced.

The agendas for all sessions are printed in the programme book, so everyone has notification of the business to be conducted. Much of the business is relatively routine, dealing with individual officers speaking briefly about their reports, which are printed in the conference programme for all to see. The ‘high spots’ come when controversial new ideas or developments are dealt with and discussed! This time, two issues aroused particular interest:

- The report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Arts & Humanities Jury, and
- The report of the Ad Hoc Committee for the study of Electronic Elections.

Both matters were subsequently presented to Saturday’s General Meeting for discussion and voting. The first report led to speculation that Arts & Humanities were being demoted from a place in The Bulletin. In fact, the reverse is true – an online ‘gallery’, skilfully managed, will allow many more aspects of work produced by members to be ‘showcased’. The rationale for discontinuing poetry is the difficulty presented by evaluating submissions. The second report carried with it many implications. The thought of possible cost caused considerable excitement, but the actual cost *per member* would be relatively small. Data available indicates that less than 10% of people entitled to participate in an electronic vote actually do so. Those without internet access would need a postal vote. Some argued that DKG already has a ‘representative democracy’, through the votes cast by state presidents on behalf of members. However, as one ‘savvy’ member pointed out, a vote isn’t of much use if it is only to confirm (or not) the nominees ‘slated’ by the Nominations Committee! This aspect

might well lead to more choice being given by, for example, the Nominations Committee putting forward more than one person (if appropriate) for each position to be filled. Such developments could have far-reaching consequences: would elections become much more like a presidential campaign; might possible revisions signal the end of any hope of European members becoming officers? Further investigation and reporting will take place. However, change is in the air - witness the contested vote for the election of the First Vice President.

Kate York

OPENING MEETING

The International President, Jensi Souders, presided. First the flags of the nations were presented, and we were welcomed to New York and the Convention. The speaker was Tori Murden McClure, President of Spalding University in Louisville, KY. She set the pace as she shared experiences and challenged the audience to ***Dare Mighty Things***. She was the first woman to row across the Atlantic Ocean, and documented her adventures in the book, *'A Pearl in the Storm'*. At the age of 36, she rowed for 81 days, a distance of 2,962 miles. She was also the first woman and first American to ski to the geographic South Pole. In her career she has served as a chaplain at Boston City Hospital, executive director of a shelter for homeless women and a public policy analyst for the Mayor of Louisville. She also worked for the boxer and humanitarian, Muhammad Ali.



She used Shakespeare's ***Seven Ages of Man*** to illustrate how throughout life some people can act like infants, schoolboys, etc., whereas what we should all do is progress through the stages. She had a good repertoire of 'one-liners': 'the best thing about my faults is the joy they bring to others' as an example. Or, in describing skiing to the South Pole, which took 9 hours a day for 7 days a week, 'the impossible takes a little longer'. She advised teachers to give students choices of landmarks they will follow, taking one step at a time to reach their goal. She described both her great adventures as an attempt to close the gap between promise and performance. She certainly came across as someone you could rely on in a crisis – or to share a convivial night out!

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)

(Photo of Tori Murden McClure by Jim*)

NEW YORK NIGHT—ALL SIDES OF THE BIG APPLE!

This gave us the opportunity to see some of the diverse talent found in New York. Karen Butters chaired the committee that put this excellent show together. We kicked off with Dandy Wellington and his Band who played later as well. I really enjoyed his *Ain't misbehaving*, written by Duke Ellington in prison for not paying alimony – this song paid for his release! They were followed by the Native American Redhawk Dance Troupe who explained their belief in the drum being the earth's heartbeat. They work with disaffected youngsters, and Lily, a student learning the traditional styles, demonstrated her graceful butterfly dance. Other dances performed included a grasshopper dance from South Dakota and a medicine dance from Hawaii about rain coming to earth to heal an ill girl. The Blackfoot traditional 'life-givers' dance for Clan Mothers was about the monthly cycle, apparently Dutch settlers realised from watching this dance that they were seeing women with power. When many tribes were pushed together into Oklahoma the dancers competed against each other in dances such as the war dance performed for us. The troupe closed with an amazing spectacle of a Cree hoop dance – it was wonderful and exciting.



Geoff Packard and Celisse Henderson came on next, excellent singers who gave us songs such as *Right Before My Eyes* and a fabulous duet. Celine finished with her version of Barbra Streisand's *Don't Rain on My Parade*. A group called Soul Steps followed, they got us clapping, and in a lively performance showed their 'stepping' skills. They explained how these skills were used during slavery, and how steps, along with their ancestors' African drums, were a form of communication. Ending on a 'high note' the UN singers sang in their own languages. Dressed in their native costume they inspired us with songs from Japan, the Philippines and Venezuela, finishing with *Sweet Georgia Brown* and John Lennon's *Imagine*.

At the end we queued for our late-night snack boxes which included pretzels, delicious River Rat cheese and fortune cookies...Very New York!

Diana Bell (Alpha Chapter)

(Photo of the American Indian Dancer by Jim*)

SECOND GENERAL MEETING

Dr Jensi Souders called us to order, introduced key members and held a roll call of States. DKG collections in the coming biennium will support Early-Career Educators. The Educators Award was a book by Dr Donna Hicks entitled, "Dignity: The Role It Plays in Resolving Conflict."

Our Vision and Design Spotlight speaker was Ramu Damodaran. His command and choice of words earned my greatest respect. He works in the United Nations Department of Public Information's Outreach Division and is Deputy Director for Partnerships and Public Engagement. He opened with admiration for feminine energy and power potential but soon had us absorbed by the United Nations story, its history in striving for peace and the elimination of poverty since the First World War. He led us through the depression of the 1930s, the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War with the then U.S.S.R. He believed that the UN was instrumental in stopping a third world war. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the USSR began a process of decolonisation but governments became afraid of their own people; they were not immune from their own domestic situation and the wider world.

After 1995, there was a shift in thinking. Women's issues were no longer seen as a global political issue but linked to using women as a means to ends. Ramu Damodaran felt that inter-governmental mechanisms were not going to deliver and it was necessary to involve academic comment and civil society. The way forward was through people and groups working together in tandem with the UN. We were told the struggle for civil rights and the struggle to maintain the environment across cultures would take much **will** but that elected governments must be respected. In turn they should deliver policy and goods. He asked us to think what we are capable of if women and men around the world act and work together. We had a right to be angry about lack of human rights and that every member of the UN should make a concerted decision. Governments must function on an everyday level to take the poor out of poverty and send every child to primary school. We were asked to think what that means to the world at large.

He said that education had a primary role to play. Knowledge gave people power as advocates, not only jobs and skills. People could realise political and social potential through the power of individuals to change the system, groups for change.

He emphasised that giving should not always be linked to money and altruism, but to making a sustainable environment. We should share experience but beware pitfalls. In lighter manner he ended with a story.

In 1929 a court decreed that a club for men only should admit women. The men decided that they would make the women members but not tell them!

After rapturous applause, The Second General Meeting ended with a song beautifully sung by Turid Dahlman from Norway.

Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)

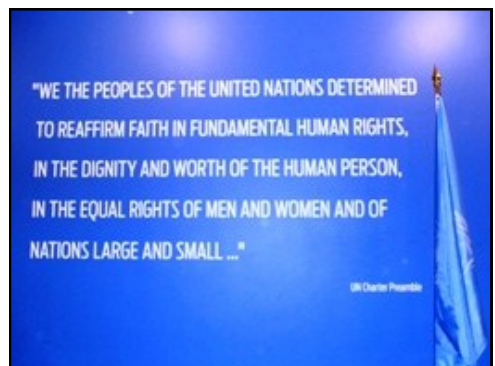


This beautiful tapestry was a gift to the United Nations. So far Great Britain has not made such a gift!
(Photo by Ed.)



Ramu Damodoran at the podium *

This notice in the United Nations Building in New York reaffirms the declaration of Human Rights.
(Photo by Ed)



CELEBRATION OF LIFE

The ceremony preceding the 4th General Meeting on Saturday morning was well attended and appreciated by those present recalling with affection the members who had given especial service to the Society. Of particular interest to our GB members were the eulogies to Jane Posten, (former Information Services Administrator at HQ who prepared the DKG NEWS for many years) and a guest at our GB Conference in Bristol in 1996: Ruby Matthews, from South Carolina, the international president from 1992-4 who led the Society with gentle grace, poise and humour during its peak membership of more than 165,000 and 3,000 chapters: Elizabeth Garner from Alabama, Chair of the Nominations Committee in my first two years on the Committee and later Southeast Regional Director who kept us to task with excellent preparation and firm commitment to the needs and requirements of the Society.

The Chair of the international Membership Committee, Hanna Fowler from Georgia elected as Southeast Regional Director in New York and an enthusiastic participant in London at our Regional Conference in 2007, introduced representatives who gave a short address and placed a white rose of remembrance for each region and individual named. As in previous years, the Convention Choir sang 'Wings of Peace' composed and conducted by Pat Taylor and an unusual, additional item was a moving hand bell ensemble from a group from neighbouring New Jersey.

Mary Wardrop (*Gamma Chapter*)



This photo shows the central table after all the white roses have been put in place. It also shows that throughout the entire Convention, the Union Flag literally takes centre stage!

(Photo by Ed.)

EUROPEAN BREAKFAST 27 JULY 2012

What an early start especially as, prior to the beginning of the breakfast, I had to vote on behalf of GB State in the election for First International Vice President. This meant being bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at 6.30 am, to vote - not my best time of the day! However, I did cast the vote and even managed to place postcards and leaflets for Kate at each person's place before most people arrived.

We were 67 people for the breakfast. The room was 'cosy', the company lively and in great spirits. Kate, who had organised everything well in advance in her very efficient way, presided and welcomed everybody. We sat at tables by state which was rather nice as we had all been rushing around so much during the week we had barely any time to meet our fellow compatriots. The food seemed to be an American take on bacon and scrambled eggs - no self-respecting British restaurant would have served such streaky bacon with bagels!

Money was raised for the 'Emergency Fund' by holding a raffle. (Each State president had been asked to provide a prize and Kate had purchased the speaker's book as a prize). Diana Bell won the wonderful book, *Children of Ellis Island*, signed by the author, Barry Moreno, our very excellent speaker.

Throughout the breakfast we were visited by Jensi and various other members of the Administrative Board. It was a friendly and relaxed way to start the penultimate day of the conference.

Sheila Roberts (*State President*)

ISLE OF HOPE, ISLAND OF TEARS

ELLIS ISLAND AND THE IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Once again Kate York arranged a fantastic Speaker for our European Breakfast. Barry Moreno, author, historian and freelance speaker based at the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island Immigration Museum presented an evocative, sensitive picture of millions of people who crossed the Atlantic for a new life for themselves and their families. On arrival at Ellis Island, information about the immigrants and their countries of origin were handed over by the purser who had collected their records on embarkation for the voyage. In many cases, men had travelled first and sent for their wives and children later on. A third of those who arrived at their destination returned home or went to other countries. 20% only stayed one night and several categories were turned away – paupers, beggars, epileptics, and fascists - convicts were sent to Staten Island. Many arrivals were confronted with racial prejudice, some nationalities more acceptable than others and sadly discrimination and bigotry were rife.

Women were considered unequal, although English educated women being the exception were made more welcome and also men who had travelled first class, diplomats and ministers.

A medical inspection was made on arrival and doctors marked individuals with specific coding after medical and mental tests to signify suitability. Additional staff included missionaries, social workers, and Catholic priests. 600-700 workers were in employment who were nurses, guards and others who attended to the coal furnaces, Post Office and eating places providing Anglo-American food. Although some immigrants were offered translators to assist in communication with them, many spoke folk dialects and languages which the translators found unfamiliar. Costumes, facial features, and native tongues were strange and incomprehensible to others in their new environment. Thousands of their children sadly died from measles or diphtheria whilst on Ellis Island.

WW2 was a particularly grim time. Thousands of Germans, Italians and Japanese were detained on Ellis Island and afterwards many were repatriated to their country of origin. Subsequently it was used as a detention centre for Cubans and people from Guatemala. During the McCarthy era, Communists had a difficult time and were regarded as aliens not receiving the right to have a lawyer or other advice.

On a happier note, Barry Moreno explained that the lists kept in the Island's Immigration Museum included many famous names - Bob Hope who came from Orpington in Kent, Max Factor from Poland, Charlie Chaplin, Valentino, Irving Berlin. Many anglicised their names for convenience and went to Vaudeville performances to perfect their English. The Immigration Centre on Ellis Island closed in 1954 and one hopes that a more sympathetic approach now prevails. It was apparent from Barry's presentation, that many of us learned a great deal and felt the utmost sympathy for the immigrants who arrived at Ellis Island, uncertain but full of hope for a better life in the New World.

Mary Wardrop (Gamma Chapter)

(The photo, taken by Unity Harvey, shows Jensi Souders, International President, Kate York, and the speaker at the European Breakfast, Barry Moreno)



MEDIEVAL UNICORNS

Our European Unicorns reside in Paris, in the Cluny Museum, in medieval tapestries, ordered by Jean le Viste between 1471 and 1475, probably in pride at having been appointed to a post by the King of France at the Royal Court. Who knows? There is a separate group of unicorn tapestries in New York, taken there by a Rockefeller and placed in a special museum called 'The Cloisters'. So as DKG was organising the 2012 International Convention in New York, and there would be folks there from



both sides of the Atlantic, this seemed a golden opportunity to share our international heritage. As a result, I have had a wonderful time researching both sets of tapestries. Each collection consists of a sequence of tapestries illustrating two different unicorn themes, each produced in master weavers' workshops near Brussels, but of vastly different styles and themes. What a fascinating contrast! The six European tapestries were ordered as a whole group and produced in one workshop: each is 15 feet high, and five of them depict the five senses of taste, smell, hearing, sight and touch. The final one has the words 'A mon seul desir' inscribed across a canopy, and no-one can solve the problem of its true meaning. Each tapestry has a gorgeous maiden, guarded by a lion and a unicorn, bearing heraldic standards of the Le Viste family.

The six Cloisters tapestries are a great contrast and depict 'The Hunt of the Unicorn'. They were not all produced in the same workshop. The unicorn is finally seduced by a maiden, and killed to be brought in triumph to the lord and lady, but miraculously the final tapestry depicts him happily relaxing in a flower-filled enclosure, obviously quite healthy, beautiful and content. The hunt scenes are alive and full of activity, beautiful animals, yokels, and even two scandal-gossiping old wives. One wonders at the skill, the imagination and the visual knowledge of the artists who could visualise and portray such fantastic detail, and that it could be translated into a scene which could be produced so beautifully by weavers. The contrast is amazing: Cluny maidens are sedate and decorous, the Cloisters hunt is so vitally energetic. All the tapestries survived the destruction of the French Revolution, as they had no royal insignia, but have drastically deteriorated as they lay for up to 200 years, mouldering and eaten by rats in abandoned chateaux. An amazing amount of repair work has retrieved their glory. My most serious thanks go to Kate York, who so generously gave of her time and skills to produce a glorious visual presentation which enhanced my inadequate words. Thank you, Kate.

Finale—leaving the underground station near the New York Museum, I heard a voice say, 'See that little lady with the case? I think she is DKG. I think she's the unicorn lady we heard about'. They had not attended my lecture but had heard of it, and set off in search of my unicorns!

The Unicorn Lady (better known to us as Dorothy Haley, Gamma Chapter)

FOURTH GENERAL MEETING

\$22,530 had been collected at the Regional Breakfasts for the Emergency Fund, which supports members who have been affected by disasters such as floods. There were a number of reports from Committees: perhaps the most interesting announcement for members being that there will be no increase in dues in the near future!

The speaker was Murray Fisher, of the Harbor School on Governors Island, New York, entitled 'New York Harbor School: Training the next generation of environmental stewards'. They run programmes in maritime education, to produce the skilled people necessary to protect, in the first place, the environment of the Hudson River catchment area. There are now 6 different maritime-based courses, which concentrate on giving students the scientific and technical skills they need. One big project concerns bringing back the oyster reefs which used to be all over New York Harbour. The school has gained funding for a 20-year oyster restoration programme, starting with an oyster hatchery. The skills taught at the school ensure there are available scuba divers to plant oysters on the reefs, boat drivers and engineers, marine biologists, and all the necessary skills. Oysters are a keystone species, as each oyster can filter 24 gallons of water a day, and 1 million oysters could therefore have a real impact on the 74 billion polluted gallons of water in NY Harbour. The oysters will not, however, be edible because of the continuing pollution: when there is heavy rain the drains give up and sewage is discharged into the harbour. This is a great pity particularly because the New York water supply is very pure.



Many of the students go on to study marine biology. One concern for the school is where to find jobs for the graduates. They discovered that areas such as Chesapeake Bay are searching for people to do the work: all say that marine science graduates are desperately needed. This kind of project could work for any degraded marine ecosystem, since many rivers are in crisis. It was good to hear such a positive contribution to the conference, from someone who is clearly passionate about his students and the environment.

Diane Billam (*Gamma Chapter*)

(photo of Murray Fisher by Jim)*

VISITING GROUND ZERO

It was inevitable that a visit to New York was going to include a visit to Ground Zero. For me it was especially poignant as two of the victims were known to me. The last time I visited New York the Twin Towers stood tall and proud as if on guard; this time the scene was so very different. We had obtained Passes earlier for our visit and the security and effective, clear monitoring of guards, assistants etc. provided a well-organised trouble-free path to the site.

In place of the two tall buildings, there were two very large, deep water features. Surrounding each was a grey marble wall, flat on top on which all the names of the victims were clearly engraved. Water constantly poured from all sides enhancing the sadness, yet providing a calmness for everyone. It was encouraging to see the many families attending and we were aware of the respectful atmosphere displayed.

It was comforting for me to be accompanied by Mary as my purpose was to pay my respects to the daughter, and her husband, of a Canadian cousin. Armed with information as to where I would find their names, I found myself feeling quite emotional when I actually saw them. We both felt particularly sad when reading of a person and their unborn child! The names written at the site were obviously of people from all over the world, of all races, creeds and colours.

The landscaping of the site is developing and, when the sounds of the construction taking place outside are silenced, it will evermore be a fitting, impressive place, where many will go to pay their respects to those tragic victims.

Evelyn Goodsell (Gamma Chapter)



(The Editor took these photos of the South and North Pools on a visit to the 9/11 Memorial Site, and can only endorse what Evelyn has said about the experience. The enormous size of the pools can be seen from the tiny trees and people surrounding them)





GB State members at the Convention: from top left: Evelyn Goodsell, Mary Wardrop, Diana Bell, Sheila Roberts, Di Billam, Kate York, Unity Harvey (photo by Jim *). Dorothy Haley was at the Convention, but that day was on a trip to Washington.

Not all work though—Mary, Diana, Sheila, Di and Evelyn at a local hostelry.



Sheila brings the Union Flag out from the Convention at the end of the Fourth General Meeting.

ALPHA CHAPTER REPORTS

On Saturday 19 May we visited Highgate Cemetery, which was established in 1839. We joined the West Side Tour. Our guide was a weekend volunteer who told us that he was an undertaker during the week! He was quite a character and gave us a fascinating tour, explaining a great deal about the cemetery, its monuments and many famous 'inhabitants'. We had a look at the East Side ourselves and saw the tomb of Karl Marx (odd in a Christian burial place), and other tombs of people from many origins, especially Polish.



We had a brief tour of Dulwich Hamlet Juniors before our meeting on Saturday 30 June. Claire Purcell showed us around the DHJS Art Exhibition. As we have seen before, this was of a very high standard. Some of the most fascinating and unusual exhibits were chairs that, using various artistic techniques, were made to express emotions, for example, love. Unity Harvey also gave us an illustrated talk about 'The value of the Wetlands' at this meeting. She told us how the London Wetland Centre was conceived by Sir Peter Scott and built on land that had been reservoirs. Unity took us on an illustrated 'virtual tour' of one of the Wetland walks, *World Wetlands*, and gave a fascinating account of the birds (many endangered), some insects, and included the effects of climate change. She told us of the work of the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust Conservation Organization: to preserve, protect and promote wetlands and their wildlife: through learning and being close to nature they hope to inspire people to help the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust with conservation work.

In early July it was The Royal Society Exhibition. The Society was founded in 1660. Members, who are elected for life on the basis of scientific excellence, have included Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Ernest Rutherford, Albert Einstein, Dorothy Hodgkin, Francis Crick, James Watson and Stephen Hawking. We were welcomed by Jo Corden, the archivist, who later joined us for lunch. The 2012 exhibition was, as ever, fascinating. Favourites included: testing for taste in people who can curl their tongues – the theory being that they can taste more with the tip of their tongue. (After testing we got a sweet to take the bitter taste away). Work on the 'breathless' gene involved testing our lung capacity. We also enjoyed hearing about minute balloons made to contain medication and injected into the blood stream. On reaching their target area they can then be 'popped' to release the medication. Genetic mapping was also fun – we checked our names to find the area where our families came from.

This was my last meeting as Alpha Chapter President and I would like to thank all members for their help, support and contribution to making it such a pleasant experience.

Diana Bell (Outgoing Chapter President)

Diana hands over to Dorcas



Alpha Chapter Programme 2012 – 2013

(please note that times for our social gatherings over lunch or supper are still to be decided and will always be advertised sufficiently in advance for you to make your plans. We would like you to join us whenever you can.)

15 September: meeting at Dulwich Hamlet Village School (DHJS) 2 pm to 4.30 pm, full meeting with buffet lunch (provided by Dorcas) - `The way forward for the next 2 years for Alpha Chapter` - a time to explore where we are now and where we want to be in 2 years' time.

20 October: LSBU from 2 pm to 4.30 pm, talk by Pauline Maddison—`Improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged children`. An educational and social perspective. This will be followed by a full business meeting.

17 November: DHJS from 2 pm to 4.30 pm, talk by Sheelagh Mealing `Still Waters run Deep—exploring new educational markets in health care` - creating new educational markets and the risks involved plus working with a variety of awarding bodies within the QCF. This will be followed by a full business meeting.

22 December: at 40 Somerford Way, SE16 6QW from 11.30 am—4.30 pm, a winter walk followed by Christmas Lunch and talk from Barbara about her experiences of participating in the Opening Ceremony for the Paralympics.

19 January: Bethnal Green 11.00 am to 2 pm, visit to the Museum of Childhood with a focus on the Victorian child at home and school. This will be followed by a short meeting.

9 February: LSBU 2 pm—4.30 pm, talk by Sarah, `The lived experience of home education`. (Sarah is currently educating all 3 secondary school children at home.) This will be followed by a full business meeting.

16 March: Brunswick Square 11.00 to 2 pm, visit to the Foundling Hospital, followed by a short meeting.

Weekend of 23 March—State Conference

20 April: DHJS 2 pm—4.30 pm, talk by Cindy Glover, title TBC but focussing on a current project (run by the Mental Health Foundation) to develop self-help groups for people with early stage dementia. This will be followed by a full business meeting.

18 May: at Hampstead 11.00 am to 2 pm, visit to 2 Willow Road or Fenton House and Gardens (National Trust Properties). This will be followed by a short meeting.

15 June: LSBU 2 pm—4.30 pm, talk by Sandra Doyle. Title TBC but focussing on her work as an illustrator and volunteer for the Natural History Museum.

July: at Brixton, date and time TBC, visit Brixton Windmill and Market. This will be followed by our final meeting of the year.

Dorcas Rogers (Chapter President)

BETA CHAPTER REPORTS

Beta members have had a very busy summer, though not necessarily with Beta-related projects. In fact, it has proved impossible – for various reasons – for us to have 100% attendance at any meeting so far, and my desire to hold such a meeting has resulted in cancellations – for example, I decided to cancel the proposed summer excursion to Powderham Castle. Another trip to Anthony, a magical stately home very near to Plymouth, but lying in Cornwall, has been postponed. These have also been challenging times for some of our members – Sue Torr is undergoing the upheaval of transforming ‘Shout it Out’ from a Limited Company to a Community Project. Worst of all, Loetitia has had a nasty fall, from which she is recuperating, I’m happy to say, but needs to take things easy for the time being.

There is good news, however. A small number of us (smaller than we would wish!) made our way, at Beryl’s generous invitation, to her lovely Cornwall hide-away at Crafthole; it was particularly nice to be able to introduce Sue Blackburn there as her first visit – and to learn from her that Beryl’s roof-top family of gulls – including the one with the lame leg – were in fact herring gulls, and a protected species. We enjoyed both the magnificent lunch and the gorgeous view that are features of a visit to Beryl! But the crowning success of this term is Zoe’s achievement of an Upper Second Class Honours degree, helped along by her Canterbury Award. We look forward to hearing more about Zoe’s studies in the field of Literature for Children.

Gail Gladwin (*Chapter President*)

Forthcoming meetings: **September 2012:** a late-summer outing to Anthony (postponed from July) TBA **October 2012:** talk to be given by Zoe on her Open University degree course TBA **Christmas:** festive meeting, details to be arranged TBA

GAMMA CHAPTER REPORTS

At last the summer seems to have arrived and as we’re never sure how long it will last I certainly intend to enjoy every minute of it! I hope you are too. When I last wrote to you it was a very different story and we were wondering if the ‘Bluebell Walk’ in April would be able to go ahead. As expected, the day promised to be changeable, to put it mildly. We arrived at Sheila’s house in the rain but in time for a most welcome cup of coffee. A break in the weather saw the intrepid adventurers setting out for their walk. The bluebells were magnificent, the weather stayed fine, the company was exceptional and a good time was had by all. A visit to a local hostelry completed the day with a delicious meal. We would really like to thank Sheila and Harry for their hospitality.

At our May meeting Janet Mulholland spoke about 'The changing face of education'. Janet is an executive head in the borough of Lambeth. She is head teacher to three schools in Brixton, Stockwell and Herne Hill and all three have been judged outstanding by Ofsted since she has taken over. At all the schools the majority of children have English as a second language. In one of the schools there are twenty seven different languages spoken. She spoke about the role of the executive head and the challenges she faced. She also explained the changes being implemented in education and the new ideas about teacher training. It certainly was a stimulating morning and I think we all felt that we would have liked more time as I'm sure there were lots more questions.

A day at the seaside was planned for June, what could be better? Unfortunately I was unable to go at the last moment. We arranged to meet at the Hydro so that we could have coffee with Pam Irons. Everyone agreed how lovely it was to see Pam and how much we've missed seeing her at our meetings. The plan was then to visit the Tower Gallery but I don't think many people did that. I understand a most enjoyable day was had by all. Before we know where we are it will be September and we'll be meeting again in the more than capable hands of Sandra Blacker. I'm already looking forward to the new programme. I hope you continue to have a wonderful summer and I'll see you all in September.

Carole Stirling (Outgoing Chapter President)

Colour it Blue

Despite the rain

The true English bluebell stood proudly,

No intruder in this wood!

A deep ultramarine to an artist's eye

With hints of purple hue,

Indeed, a carpet of the deepest blue

As far as the eye could see.

A wonder of nature against the odds survives

Its radiance refreshing the tireddest of eyes.

Rosalind Price (Gamma Chapter) (abridged.)



Gamma Chapter members
and Saskia enjoy their
walk

Gamma Programme 2012-2013 (at Beechwood School unless otherwise indicated)

29 September: talk by Susan Rogers, Tunbridge Wells Librarian, about Pauline Gower, who was a well-known aviator in the 1930s, a friend of Amy Johnson and influential in the world of flying at that time. She also played an important part in promoting the cause of women in World War 2. So why have so few people heard of her, not least in the town where she was born and grew up? Hopefully this talk will shed some light on a fascinating but sadly forgotten person.

3 November: talk by Kate Weedon, paediatric speech and language therapist, how we communicate, the role of the speech-and-language-therapist, who we work with, communication difficulties and how to identify signs, ideas and activities for children and grand-children, resources.

8 December: at Robbie Scahill's house for Christmas craft activity, bring and share lunch.

The following dates have been booked at Beechwood School: **19 January, 2 March, 8 June**, plus a summer outing to be planned.

Hope to welcome you all!

Sandra Blacker (*Chapter President*)

TO EASTBOURNE TO SEE PAM IRONS

The long-awaited trip to Eastbourne, to visit Dr. Pam Irons, finally took place at the end of June! Considering the weather we had been experiencing, we were very lucky. The sun shone and it was fairly warm. It was agreed to meet at the Hydro Hotel at coffee time. Mary and Robbie arranged to pick up Pam on the way. Sadly, due to some members teaching, and others on holiday, only five members of Gamma Chapter were able to be there. Pam was her usual bright and cheerful self and seemed genuinely pleased to see us as indeed we were to see her. It had been so long since we last met so there was a lot of 'catching up' with news of the Society and other members.

For new members who have not had the privilege of meeting Pam, she was one of the 'Founder' members of DKG in England. Although she has not been able to attend meetings for sometime now, Pam has retained her interest in the Society and its members, and she is greatly missed by us all at our Chapter meetings. Although Pam's health is slightly less robust now, Pam was in good spirits and I am sure we shall be organising more visits to see her in Eastbourne very soon.

Evelyn Goodsell (*Gamma Chapter*)

THE CANTERBURY AWARD

The following item is written by a member of Beta Chapter on the benefit she gained from winning the Canterbury Award last year. This award was initiated by GB State to help members develop both as educators and as enthusiastic participants in Society events and affairs.

Why not put in an application this year? Look for details on the website, or ask your Chapter President. Don't forget applications must be in by 30 November 2012.

DKG MEMBER TAKES 30 GAP YEARS!

I have always believed that the Open University is a wonderful idea and opportunity, and at various times in my life it has played a great part. This year I have at last completed the final module for my honours degree with an OU course entitled Children's Literature being spurred on by the generous Canterbury Award from DKG, which I was able to put towards tuition fees and badly-needed updated computer equipment.

After thirty years out of formal academic study, although continually a lifelong learner, I was more than a little apprehensive when I started the module in October 2011. However, I had prepared by reading all the set books prior to this. I was also very encouraged by comments from my old college tutor, who'd suggested OU study to me all those years ago. Further encouragement came from members of Beta Chapter, those visiting members from DKG whom I met at Plymouth's historic Barbican area, and Sandra's letter on behalf of the Executive Committee.

I received huge encouragement also from my husband, John, especially in cooking meals and negotiating the trials of submitting assignments electronically. In the OU world of the 1970s we'd handwritten those assignments and kept a carbon copy, just in case they failed to arrive by post - and we didn't have to fill in an electronic form each time declaring no plagiarism. Ah – how times have changed!

) I did find that the OU materials are still excellent with DVDs, CD-ROMs and on-line materials instead of radio and TV broadcasts at ghastly hours of the day. The module was a lot more time-consuming than I had anticipated but with a huge wealth of on-line optional materials accessible I needed to be very firm with myself to keep the assignments always in mind. These I completed with high marks and a final lovely email from the tutor saying how much she'd enjoyed reading them.

Strangely, I found that I was most interested in parts of the course which were not required for assignments very much so am looking forward to delving into them now I've more time. These involve poetry, storytelling and performance. I've been helping to facilitate a storytelling group based at The Cultural Café at the University of Plymouth where I've been utilising course material with a multicultural group including a PHD student from Iran, a white South African and representatives from European countries. Just a few days ago I was in conversation with David Heathfield, an international storyteller, about the Afro-Caribbean storyteller, Jan Blake, who featured in the course materials, and sharing her ways of working in relation to our own styles of storytelling.

The course gave opportunity to study old favourites ***Tom's Midnight Garden*** and ***Swallows and Amazons*** when we considered realism and fantasy, and surprising new titles were discovered in the "Alternative worlds" section of the Contemporary Trends block of study. I would not have chosen to read Philip Reeve's futuristic ***Mortal Engines*** nor Jamila Gavin's historical ***Coram Boy*** dealing with child slavery but such experiences have, I believe, left me with a deeper insight into who we are, as humans and, I would hope, provided me with vehicles with which to engage young adolescent readers I come across as we seek to be positive influences on our society.

A positive influence in giving opportunity for all is certainly what the OU has always set out to do. I attended every monthly Saturday tutorial here in Plymouth and a Saturday day school in Taunton, Somerset, but whilst finding these invaluable in content and contact with others I was surprised that they weren't very well attended. After thirty years I wanted to make the most of everything. If there'd been help in dealing with a new laptop and version 7 of Windows I would have accessed that too. That was a huge new learning curve. I've agreed to give a talk to Beta Chapter about the course and my experience as I've finally emerged with BA (Hons) Open, Upper Second-class Honours, feeling very proud of myself and very grateful to all those teachers I've encountered along the way.

Thank you to them all.



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Mission Statement

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.